

THE LOST BLEND by O. Henry

How Two Speculators
Mixed a Marvelous
Cocktail.

It Cost \$1,200, But Its
Effects Were Worth
the Money.

New Drink Was Sprung
on a South American
Republic.

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SINCE the bar has been blessed by the clergy, and cocktails open the dinners of the elect, one may speak of the saloon. Teetotalers need not listen, if they choose; there is always the slot restaurant, where a dime, dropped into the cold bouillon aperture will bring forth a dry Martini.

Con Lantry worked on the sober side of the bar in Kenely's cafe. You and I stood, one-legged like geese, on the other side and went into voluntary liquidation with one week's wages. Opposite danced Con, clean, temperate, clear-headed, polite, white-jacketed, punctual, trustworthy, young, responsible, and took our money.

The saloon (whether blessed or cursed) stood in one of those little "places" which are parallelograms instead of streets, and inhabited by laundries, decayed knickerbocker families and Bohemians who have nothing to do with either.

Over the cafe lived Kenely and his family. His daughter Katherine had eyes of dark Irish—but why should you be told? Be content with your Geraldine or your Eliza Ann. For Con dreamed of her; and when she called softly at the foot of the back stairs for the pitcher of beer for dinner, his heart went up and down like a milk punch in

the shaker. Orderly and fit are the rules of Romance; and if you hurl the last shilling of your fortune upon the bar for whisky, the bartender shall take it, and marry his boss' daughter, and good will grow out of it.

But not so Con. For in the presence of woman he was tongue-tied and scarlet. He who would quell with his eye the sonorous youth whom the claret punch made loquacious, or smash with lemon squeezer the obstreperous, or hurl gutterward the cantankerous without a wrinkle coming to his white lawn tie, when he stood before woman he was voiceless, incoherent, stuttering, buried beneath a hot avalanche of bashfulness and misery. What then was he before Katherine? A trembler, with no word to say for himself, a stone without blarney, the dumbest lover that ever babbled of the weather in the presence of his divinity.

There came to Kenely's two sunburned men, Riley and McQuirk. They had conference with Kenely; and then they took possession of a back room which they filled with bottles and siphons and jugs and druggists' measuring glasses. All the appurtenances and liquids of a saloon were there, but they dispensed no drinks. All day long the two sweltered in there pouring and mixing unknown brews and concoctions from the liquors in their store. Riley had the education, and he figured on reams of paper, reducing gallons to ounces and quarts to field drachms. McQuirk, a morose man with a red eye, dashed each unsuccessful completed mixture into the waste pipes with curses gentle, husky, and deep. They labored heavily and untriflingly to achieve some mysterious solution like two alchemists striving to resolve gold from the elements.

Into this back room one evening when his watch was done sauntered Con. His professional curiosity had been stirred by these occult bartenders at whose bar none drank, and who daily drew upon Kenely's store of liquors to follow their consuming and fruitless experiments.

Down the back stairs came Katherine with her smile like sunrise on Gwecbarra Bay.

"Good evening, Mr. Lantry," says she. "And what is the news today, if you please?"

"It looks like r-r-rain," stammered the shy one, backing to the wall.

"It couldn't do better," said Katherine. "I'm thinking there's nothing the worse off for a little water." In a back room Riley and McQuirk toiled like bearded witches over their strange compounds. From fifty bottles they drew liquids carefully measured after Riley's figures, and shook the whole together in a great glass vessel. Then McQuirk would dash it out, with gloomy profanity, and they would begin again.

"Sit down," said Riley, "and I'll tell you." "Last summer me and Tim concludes that an American bar in this nation of Colombia would pay. There was a town on the coast where there's nothing to eat but quinine and nothing to drink but rum. The natives and foreigners lay down with chills and get up with fevers; and a good mixed drink is nature's remedy for all such tropical inconveniences.

"So we lays in a fine stock of wet goods in New York, and bar fixtures and glassware, and we sails for that Santa Palma town on a fruit steamer that had brought in a load of limes. On the way me and Tim sees flying fish and plays seven-up with the captain and steward, and already begins to feel like the high-ball kings of the tropic of Capricorn.

"When we gets in five hours of the country we was going to introduce to rickies and short change the captain calls us over to the starboard binnacle and recollects a few things.

"I forgot to tell you, boys," says he, "that Nicaragua slapped an import duty of 48 per cent ad valorem on all bottled goods last month. The President took a bottle of Cincinnati hair tonic by mistake for tobacco sauce, and he's getting even. Barred goods is free."

"Sorry you didn't mention it sooner," says we. And we bought two forty-two gallon casks from the captain, and opened every bottle we had and dumped the stuff all together in the casks. That 48 per cent would have ruined us; so we took the chances on making that \$1,200 cocktail rather than throw the stuff away.

"Well, when we landed we tapped one

of the barrels. The mixture was something heartrending. It was the color of a plate of Bowery pea soup, and it tasted like one of those coffee substitutes your aunt makes you for the heart trouble you get by picking losers. We gave a nigger four fingers of it to try it, and he lay under a coconut tree three days beating the sand with his



heels and refused to sign a testimonial. "But the other barrel! Say, bartender, did you ever put on a straw hat with a yellow band around it and go up in a balloon with a pretty girl with \$2,000,000 in your pocket all at the same time? That's what thirty drops of it would make you feel like. With two

fingers of it inside you you would bury your face in your hands and cry because there wasn't anything more worth while around you to lick than little Jim Jeffries. Yes, sir, the stuff in that second barrel was distilled elixir of battle, money, and high life. It was the color of gold and as clear as glass, and it shone after dark like

"'Twas by accident that we discovered this king of drinks, and 'twill be by good luck if we strike it again."

the sunshine was still in it. A thousand years from now you'll get a drink like that across the bar.

"Well, we started up business with that one line of drinks, and it was enough. The plebeian gentry of that country stuck to it like a hive of bees. If that barrel had lasted that country would have become one of the greatest on earth. When we opened up of mornings we had a line of generals and colonels and ex-Presidents and revolutionists a block long waiting to be served. We started in at 50 cents silver a drink. The last ten gallons went easy at \$5 a gulp. It was wonderful stuff. It gave a man courage and ambition and nerve to do anything; at the same time he didn't care whether his money was tainted or fresh from the ice trust. When that barrel was half

gone Colombia had repudiated the national debt, removed the duty on cigarettes, and was about to declare war on the United States and England.

"'Twas by accident that we discovered this king of drinks, and 'twill be by good luck if we strike it again. For ten months we've been trying. Small lots at a time, we've mixed barrels of all the harmful ingredients known to the profession of drinking. Ya could have stocked ten barrels with the whiskeys, brandies, cordials, bitters, gins and wines me and Tim have wasted. A glorious drink like that to be denied to the world! 'Tis a sorrow and a loss of money. The United States as a nation would welcome a drink of the sort, and pay for it."

All the while McQuirk had been carefully measuring and pouring together small quantities of various spirits, as Riley called them, from his latest pencilled prescription. The completed mixture was of a vile, mottled chocolate color. McQuirk tasted it, and hurled it, with appropriate epithets, to the waste sink.

"'Tis a strange story, even if true," said Con. "I'll be going now along to my supper."

"Take a drink," said Riley. "We've all kinds except the lost blend."

"I never drink," said Con. "Anything stronger than water. I am just after meeting Miss Katherine by the stairs. She said a true word. 'There's not anything,' says she, 'but is better off for a little water.'"

When Con had left them Riley almost felled McQuirk by a blow on the back.

"Did ye hear that?" he shouted. "Two fools are we. The six dozen bottles of 'pollinaris' we had on the ship—we opened them yourself—which barrel did ye pour them in—which barrel yourself, ye mudhead?"

"I mind," said McQuirk, slowly. "Twas in the second barrel we opened I mind the blue piece of paper pasted on the side of it."

"We've got it now," cried Riley. "'Twas that we lacked. 'Tis the water that does the trick. Everything else we had right. Hurry, man, and get two bottles of 'pollinaris' from the bar while

I figure out the proportions with me pencil."

An hour later Con strolled down the sidewalk toward Kenely's cafe. Thus faithful employes haunt, during their recreation hours, the vicinity where they labor, drawn by some mysterious attraction.

A police patrol wagon stood at the side door. Three able cops were half carrying, half hustling Riley and McQuirk up its rear steps. The eyes and faces of each bore the bruises and cuts of sanguinary and assiduous conflict. Yet they whooped with strange joy, and directed upon the police the feeble remnants of their pugnacious madness.

"Began fighting each other in the back room," explained Kenely to Con. "And singing! That was worse. Smashed everything pretty much up. But they're good men. They'll pay for everything. Trying to invent some new kind of cocktail, they was. I'll see they come out all right in the morning."

Con sauntered into the back room to view the battlefield. As he went through the hall Katherine was just coming down the stairs.

"Good evening again, Mr. Lantry," said she. "And is there no news from the weather yet?"

"Still threatens r-r-rain," said Con, slipping past with red in his smooth, pale cheek.

Riley and McQuirk had indeed waged a great and friendly battle. Broken bottles and glasses were everywhere. The room was full of alcohol fumes; the floor was variegated with spirituous puddles.

On the table stood a 32-ounce glass graduated measure. In the bottom of it were two tablespoonfuls of liquid—a bright golden liquid that seemed to hold the sunshine a prisoner in its auriferous depths.

Con smelled it. He tasted it. He drank it.

As he returned through the hall Katherine was just going up the stairs.

"No news yet, Mr. Lantry?" she asked, with her teasing laugh.

Con lifted her clear from the floor and held her there. "The news is," he said, "that we're to be married."

AN ACQUITTAL FOR RUSSEL SAGE

IT IS DREAD OF BESTOWING-TAINTED MONEY THAT.... RESTRAINS THE FINANCIER-FROM GIFTS TO PHILANTHROPY.

(Copyright, 1905, by S. S. Cline.)
By STRICKLAND W. GILLILAN.

HAVING marketed a few Literary Gold Bricks in Easy Old New York the other day, and having a few hours to incinerate, I became inoculated with a Fool Notion to call on Uncle Russ Sage, the Philanthropist in Disguise.

Entering the Office at 31 Nassau Street, I was greeted with Well-Concealed Hospitality by a middle-aged Person who asked me Who I was and what I Wanted. I replied with great Ho-turrrrrrr that I was equally Curious to know his own Cognominal plans and Specifications and his Earthly Desires.

"I am," replied He, "Mr. Sage's bomb-proof Clerk who once Absent-mindedly Interposed myself between the Spendthrift and a Hasty Human Eccentricity who sought to Present him with a Preserved Citron."

"How am I to know you are Who you say you Are?" I asked with the Remainder of my Ho-turrrrrrr.

Why the Exorbitant Reward?

"Because," he replied Triumphant, "here on my Watch-Guard is the Fifty-Cent Piece old Extravagance gave me for Saving his Life."

"But how," argued I, still Unconvinced, "did Mr. Sage come to Load you Down with such an Exorbitant Reward?"

"Because," again replied the Man, with some Impatience, "if you will look Carefully at the Edges of the Coin you will Note that it has Bum Milling, and the Bountiful Hand suspected that he could not Pass it on the Apple Woman."

There was no way to Sidestep Logic of that Brand, so I apologized for my Inquisitiveness, and Added:

"I wish to speak to Mr. Sage with a View to setting him Right before the Public. It may have Reached your Arcular Offices that Greatheart has a Reputation away to the Worse among the Telling Masseurs, and I am Anxious to Demonstrate to them that they are Baying up the Erroneous Sapling."

After this Line of Talk had been Eliminated from my System, I was ushered into the Presence of another Attenuated Attendant who had me Wait several minutes before admitting me to where sat the Object of my Quest, bravely Restraining himself from Breaking out with a long-Threatened attack of Endowitis.

Without taking his Pencil from the Column of Figures he was Welding, Mr.

Sage (for it was He) looked up at me with the Atmosphere of a person who could have been Despoiled of my Presence without the Slightest after-sense of Deprivation or Nameless Void.

Might Sign His Checks.

"Is this Mr. Sage?" I inquired with some Trepidation.

"No," said he in an Antarctic Tone, "THIS is. We must be very Pains-taking not to get our Identities Transposed, or first thing you know, in the Resultant Stampede you might be signing my Name to your Checks."

"I mean," I said with some confusion, "are you Mr. Russell Sage?"

"Ah," said he, "you're On. I'm Pleased to note your improved Intelligence. As soon as I Cast Up this column of Figures and Ascertain the bitter Truth as to how much of the Needless I have squandered on Newsboys and Fruitstands in the last Eighty-three years, I'll be at your Service to see what I can Do you for—I beg Pardon. You may Reconstruct

No Shameless Frivolity About Russ.

"Yes," said he, with such Acidity that his Reply would have turned blue Litmus Paper pink, "I know Mr. Sage. I

that Phrase if you think it Necessary."

As he Faced about to his Figures I Pondered Deeply on all I had Heard of the Man, and Decided I would not Amend his Distorted Phraseology.

Finally, after he had written down the Total, \$8,47, he Turned to me with a Sigh of Regret and an Unspoken Question in his Eyes. Upon Closer Study of the Remarkable Person I found that he Often uses his Eyes in asking Questions, to save the Wear and Tear on his Department Store Teeth.

"You know, Mr. Sage," I began, and then the Enormity of the Nervousness of what I was about to Propound arose and Smote me on the Site of my Late Lamented Conscience, and I would have fled but that I was held by his Curious Gaze.

"You know, Mr. Sage," I began lamely again.

Bent But Not Broke.

"If I Follow you at all," put in Mr. Sage at this juncture, with a Temerity that was almost Rude, considering that I was in his Own Office where Hospitality should have Reigned Supreme, "I am Expected to Gather the Signification that the World in General has Pictured me of an Economical Bent."

"Bent," I Hastily Interjected, "but not Broke. You have Grasped my Significance. It's you with the Preternatural Perspicacity."

"Well," said he, "seeing that you are the finest Congulation of Undiluted Gall it has ever been my Misfortune to Sit In with at a Friendly Game of Trade Last, I will Confide in you something that has Hitherto been Screened jealously from the Ho-i-P. It is a Secret I had supposed would be Buried with me. But when I had my Measure taken recently I found that to include both me and the Secret the Sepulcher Sharp would have to charge More for the Box. So I may as well get Shed of the Secret prior to my Demise."

Bending his Aged Face (which is the only one this Economical Gentleman has ever provided himself With) toward me and putting Cotton in his Ears so that he might not be Annoyed with the Suggestive Click of the Gas-Meter in the Corner, Mr. Sage said in an Impressive Manner:

"You have been Persuading, no doubt, of men who Gave Away to Various Institutions" (as he spoke of Giving Away Money his voice Conveyed an Inexpressible Horror) "money that was Tainted; Rhimo wrested from the Horny Hands of the Hungry Humble, and Invested in those things that go to Increase Private Wealth and Satiate Insatiable Corporate Greed. Have you not? Well, if there's Anything that shocks me Worse than the simple and Authenticated Announcement of a

Birdies on the Telephone Wires by Stammering Gold Eagles at them. You are Rated far too Careful and Humane a Person for such Shameless Frivolity."

"Yes?" said he, yawning to Conceal his Interest.

Mr. Sage is noted for the Care with which he has Concealed both his Interest and his Principal for Several Decades.

"In other words," I floundered, trying to Hedge, "you are not Believed to be one who, were he to Visit Monte Carlo, would Plunk down all his Allowance on the Carmine when the Cerulean was a Clutch. You are not Reckoned the Kind of Character to whom one would Hasten Breathlessly with a Request to exchange Two Tattered Tens for a Filthy Five. There are even those who Hint, no doubt in the Bitterness of Envy, that if you were about the House it would be a Wise Precautionary Proceeding to Sequester the Baby's Bank in the Potato Bin until you were Off the Horizon and out of sound of the Clink. You are—"

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man's giving away Real Money or anything else of Value, it is to be Told of some one's Choking into the Innocent Faws of Good People money that is Polluted in the Manner Aforementioned. Think of it! It is Maddening to Contemplate placing in the Power of Pious Preachers Dinero Defily Dug from the Damnable Depths of Demonic Desperation due to Direful Deprivation and

"Now, how do I Exhibit my Consistency in the Prejudice against giving into Helpful Hands for the work of Saving the World, Corroded Currency? First, one is under Obligations to avoid every Appearance of Evil. If giving Away Money looks Bad to some People when John R. Dockefeller does it, it would look Evil to some one Else if I did it. Second, in order to avoid Absor-

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lutely any Wrong, one should be Sure the Money is not Tainted. How do I know where Every Dollar that I have Came From? I would be unable to keep the Lupus Vulgaris from the Entrance were I to hire a sufficient Office Force to trace down every Cartwheel that

some really choice places for those dying within the borders of holy land. Since time immemorial, then, persons of the Jewish faith, who could afford it, spent their declining years here. But of late a prodigious has arisen among them who feared the old women nearly to death by a new version of the ancient belief. It is to this effect:

Women are constitutionally unfit to enter paradise unless they go to Jerusalem on or before the conclusion of their sixtieth year. In the Holy City they must acquire the right of burial, must do penance by keeping the Jews' washing place clean and by saying amen at least 500 times a day. Hence, the enormous exodus of ancient Hebrew dames from all parts of the Turkish empire; hence Jerusalem's boom in burial lots; hence the unheard-of fact that at least one portion of Jerusalem enjoys an acknowledged street cleaning service. Finally, the army of amen-sayers (but make life a burden to visitors and threaten to crack the windows of the synagogues and churches.

Love of family is an acknowledged Jewish trait, the more strange, then, is the spectacle of ten thousands of Jewish mothers, cousins, and aunts divorcing themselves from their fifth and kin and often engaging in dangerous overland or sea journeys to spend the rest of their life among strangers, in a foreign country. Infinitesimal though the income be even in Palestine, it must suf-

rice for a number of things besides food and lodging. Above all, it must buy a burial place, pails and brooms for cleaning, and an adopted son.

Before the arrival of the amen-sayers one could live comfortably in Jerusalem's soil for 50 francs, today the price of the least desirable burial lot is three times that amount. Only the installment plan lightens the burden for a healthy person. But were to the old woman from parts unknown whose store of health and strength is as slender as her resources. The grave-owner, be he Jew or Moslem, compels her to pay off at least 15 francs a month, but what joy when, in the end, the deed is handed over.

The ruins of Solomon's temple, situated in the dirtiest part of the low Moslem quarters, are known as the "Jews' waiting place." At the 200-year-old wall they gather, every Sabbath day, to kiss the stones and water them with their tears as they sing and about "For the palace that lies desolate we sit in solitude and mourn." (But no one ever sits down—all stand.) It is a curious spectacle, and one can hardly blame the Moslems for making sport of the wallers. But they do not console themselves by mocking them at their devotions.

All through the week they take care to deposit at the foot of the wall every bit of filth they can gather or produce, and that is where the amen sister comes in.

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